

COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY  
BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of:

|                                      |               |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|
| THE APPLICATION OF COLUMBIA GAS OF ) |               |
| KENTUCKY, INC., FOR PERMISSION TO )  |               |
| DEVIATE FROM THE REQUIREMENTS OF )   | CASE NO. 9491 |
| 807 KAR 5:022, SECTION 8(5)(a) )     |               |
| 1 AND 3 OF THE COMMISSION'S RULES )  |               |

O R D E R

On January 7, 1986, Columbia Gas of Kentucky, Inc., ("Columbia") filed an application with the Commission requesting a deviation from 807 KAR 5:022, Section 8(5)(a) 1 and 3, of the Commission's regulations. Columbia requests approval to change its positive-displacement meters up to 500 cubic feet per hour on a one-fourteenth annual ratio and to test one-half of its positive-displacement meters above 1500 cubic feet per hour on an annual basis. The current regulations require that positive-displacement meters above 1500 cubic feet per hour shall be tested at least once every year.

The Commission's principal concerns with this request relate to any cost savings which may be realized from less frequent meter testing and repair, the effect such a change may have on the safety to Columbia's customers, and the level of accuracy of the meters in service. Therefore, on February 4, 1986, the Commission directed Columbia to submit additional information on these matters.

In its response Columbia estimated the annual savings to be \$187,086. Expenses would decrease in the areas of meter testing and repair, accounting costs and expenses related to changing residential meters. Furthermore, Columbia stated that granting the deviation "would have no effect on (its) overall safety record." Columbia provided information which demonstrates the extent and nature of programs already in place which results in regular visits to customers' premises by Columbia personnel. During 1985 these programs included: 5-year customer service line surveys and 3-year district plant surveys; over 48,000 turn-offs and turn-ons; 5500 gas service investigations; and 6520 responses to calls on leaks, odors and/or fumes.

The Commission, after consideration of the evidence of record and being advised, is of the opinion and finds that:

1. Columbia has provided data obtained from the in-test performance of various types of domestic and large volume meters used in Kentucky and five other jurisdictions.
2. Based upon a review and analysis of this data, the types of meters used in Kentucky are performing within acceptable accuracy levels in other jurisdictions beyond 10 years, with the exception of the Ironcase 5B and 10B meters.
3. Columbia has agreed to change all Ironcase 5B and 10B meters in service within the existing 10-year requirement as set forth in 807 KAR 5:022, Section 8(5)(a) 1 and 3.
4. Columbia estimates that it will save over \$187,000 annually in reduced expenses related to meter testing and repair and meter change-outs.

5. Granting the deviation as requested by Columbia should not diminish the level of accuracy of the meters nor the quality of service to its customers, and the safety of its customers will not be compromised if the meter change-out period is extended beyond 10 years as proposed, and therefore, the request for deviation should be approved.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that Columbia be and it hereby is granted a deviation from 807 KAR 5:022, Section 8(5)(a) 1 and 3, to commence changing its positive-displacement meters up to 500 cubic feet per hour on a one-fourteenth annual ratio, and to test one-half of its positive displacement meters above 1500 cubic feet per hour on an annual basis.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this deviation shall not include any Ironcase 5B and 10B meters in service, which shall be changed within the existing 10-year requirement as set forth in 807 KAR 5:022, Section 8(5)(a).

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that no domestic meter shall remain in service beyond 20 years.

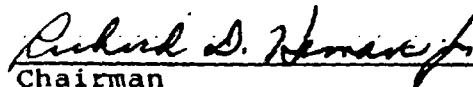
IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Columbia shall attempt to secure relevant performance data not presently available for certain meters as noted in its request for deviation, and such data shall be provided to the Commission when available, but no later than 90 days from the date of this Order Columbia shall advise the Commission of the status of this data search.

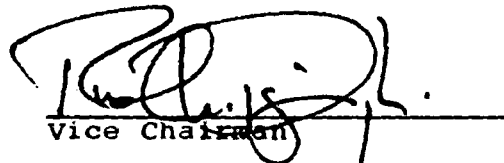
IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Columbia continue to test all new meters prior to being placed in service as required by 807 KAR 5:022, 8(3)(a).

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Columbia shall advise the Commission of the starting date of implementation of this deviation.

Done at Frankfort, Kentucky, this 23rd day of April, 1986.

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

  
Chairman

  
Vice Chairman

  
Commissioner

ATTEST:

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Secretary